



James Krupienski
Acting Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

200 GARFIELD STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR BETH DELBUONO

NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 4, 2023

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Town Clerk

This meeting was presented as a Zoom Webinar/Hybrid Meeting.

Mayor DelBuono called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ROLL CALL

- Councilor Anest
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko
- Councilor Camillo
- Councilor Donahue
- Councilor Manke
- Councilor Nagel
- Councilor Page
- Councilor Radda
- Mayor DelBuono

Staff Attendees:

- James E. Krupienski, Acting Town Manager
- Janet Murphy, Finance Director (via Zoom)
- Fauna Eller, Town Assessor

Also Present:

- Dr. Maureen L. Brummett, Superintendent of Schools
- Lou Jachimowicz, BOE, Chief Finance & Operations Officer

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Councilor Manke to approve the agenda as corrected. (7A changed to 2023-2024)
Seconded by Councilor Donahue. Motion passed 9-0.

4. AWARDS/PROCLAMATIONS

- A. Proclamation - Kent Stoddard, Volunteer of the Year 2023

Motion by Councilor Manke

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, each year the Town Council recognizes someone who has voluntarily dedicated time and/or resources for the benefit of others and the community at large; and

WHEREAS, this year Kent Stoddard is being recognized for his active and continuing involvement and support of local organizations; and

WHEREAS, Kent Stoddard was born and raised in Newington. He chose to follow examples of other residents to serve the Town in which he lives; and

WHEREAS, Kent Stoddard has been a member of the Board of Fire Commissioners since 2007, and he has also served on the Republican Town Committee since 2018; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, Kent Stoddard celebrates 50 years as an active volunteer firefighter with the Newington Volunteer Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, Kent Stoddard has been an inspirational mentor to many young firefighters in Newington as they start their firefighting careers; and

WHEREAS, Kent Stoddard rose through the ranks in the Newington Volunteer Fire Department and was promoted all the way to Lieutenant; and

WHEREAS, Kent Stoddard is a very active member of the Masons in Newington as well as the Church of Christ, Congregational; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kent Stoddard truly personifies what it means to volunteer to improve the lives of all individuals that live in, work or visit the Town of Newington; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

that the Newington Town Council hereby recognizes Kent Stoddard as its 2022 Volunteer of the Year in recognition of his volunteer activities for the welfare of the community and for serving as a positive role model and an example of all that can be accomplished through the spirit of volunteerism.

Seconded by Councilor Page. Motion passed 9-0.

- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated volunteer fire department is best in state and you have been an integral part of that. You've been there for residents and fellow firefighters. Honor to recognize you. Thank you
- Councilor Nagel stated congratulations for being Volunteer of this Year, you have been an inspiration to all and model on how to serve community and town.
- Councilor Manke offered his congratulations on this honor. You are civil and respectful.
- Councilor Page stated that you represent everything about a loving caring community.
- Councilor Radda offered her congratulations. Well deserved. Thank you for your service
- Councilor Donahue offered his congratulations.
- Councilor Anest offered her congratulations on this honor. Very well deserved. Role model of volunteerism.
- Councilor Camillo thanked Kent for 50 years; hope for another 25.
- Mayor DelBuono offered her sincere thanks and appreciation to Kent. Now the example of how to serve our town. Wish you the very best in the years to come.
- Mr. Stoddard thanks his wife and family for putting up with his for all the years. Thanked Paula Tremadio Segul who started this ball rolling. Thought this was very important gathering, decided to wear Class A uniform. Firefighter since 1983, Commissioner since 1989. Follow footsteps with many people in town. My mentor was Nel Nelson. Thanks to all current and past chiefs and commissioners over the years. Mr. Stoddard discussed his many areas of volunteering in Newington. Thank you to the town council for this recognition.

B. Proclamation – 2023 National Public Health Week

Motion by Councilor Radda

WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association has proclaimed April 3 through April 9, 2023, as National Public Health Week.

WHEREAS, this year's theme "Centering and Celebrating Cultures in Health" Feeling like we belong, being a part of our communities and fostering cultural connections supports our health and the quality of our lives; and

WHEREAS, by building healthier, stronger, and safer places to live, the United States can be the healthiest nation in one generation; and

WHEREAS, for twenty-eight years the annual celebration of National Public Health Week reminds us of the fundamental role that our own state and local health departments play every day in the health of our communities; and

WHEREAS, the Health District, in partnership with the four towns, has been dedicated and driven to reduce morbidity and mortality from COVID-19 over the last three years; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Newington, together with its neighboring towns of Berlin, Rocky Hill, and Wethersfield, receives quality public health service through its regional health department, the Central Connecticut Health District, now in its twenty-seventh year of service.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Newington Town Council, does hereby proclaim

**April 3 to April 9, 2023, as
National Public Health Week**

in Newington, Connecticut. We encourage all our citizens to join us in this celebration and in acknowledging the critical role of public health in prevention and in helping individuals and communities to achieve and maintain good health.

Seconded by Councilor Camillo. Motion passed 9-0.

- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated we are celebrating at the National Level. We are fortunate at the local level to have the CCHD and Charles Brown and his staff. We have local volunteers who are on the board and want to recognize them.
- Councilor Nagel stated that CCHD at a recent council meeting discussed all of the things that they do to protect the health of the citizens in our town which seems to be more and more challenging. I commend them and Charles Brown and our board members
- Mayor DelBuono stated it is a tremendous honor during the week of April 3-9 to draw attention to the services that CCHD provides to our town as well as Rocky Hill, Berlin and Wethersfield. Every year I get something new out of their presentation. Don't think that people know about all of the things they do.
- Jerilyn Nagel (*via Zoom*) stated to watch out for ticks this year.

**5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - IN GENERAL (Via Zoom Application or Phone)
(3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT PER SPEAKER ON ITEMS IN GENERAL)**

A. Public Comments

- Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive (*via Zoom*) stated that she has questions regarding CIP. Hard for the public to follow the money. Guidance as who to contact.
- Brian Whalen, 22 Pebble Drive. Wanted to congratulate Kent, great mentor, thank you for all you do. Stated that there is a misconception about trucks and equipment and how things work. Would like to present to you at your next April meeting. Come see the Autism truck at Firehouse 1; absolutely amazing site to see. New Ladder Truck 2 came in. Chief Trommer notified by Senator Murphy's office that we received another grant for

approx. \$45,000. Also received notification from ISO that we maintained our Class 3 Rating (only 17% in CT); very proud of that.

B. Email Correspondence

- None

6. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Mayor DelBuono stated she had a discussion with Commissioner Whelan after the Saturday budget meeting he had some concerns about the comments that were made regarding fire truck replacements Assured him that there was no ill intent meant and that we've asked for similar data in terms of replacement schedules and ages of vehicles for both the police department and board of education. Would like to add presentation to our April 25th agenda. Regarding CIP – Janet keeps an eye on town and parks & rec and Lou Jachimowicz would take care of the BOE.
- Councilor Radda congratulations on \$45,000 grant; can you tell us what it will be used for.
- Commissioner Whelan stated it is a SAFER grant and its of recruitment, retention and a digital display sign for in front Fire House 1 on Main Street.

7. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

A. FY 2022-2024 Proposed Budget Adjustments

- Mayor DelBuono stated that the Republican caucus have no changes to bring forward this evening.
- Councilor Page moved to move \$1,770,000 from the Town of Newington general fund to the Board of Education budget to prevent layoffs of teachers and staff.
 - Seconded by Councilor Radda.
 - Mayor DelBuono asked if Councilor Page had a conversation with Ms. Murphy in terms of whether we have this amount to expend.
 - Councilor Page stated he reviewed the budget prior to the proposal of other monies being drawn down from the general fund and there is approx. \$20-25 million; required to maintain 10% of our budget for bonding requirements which would be about \$14 million.
 - Councilor Manke asked what the implications to the mill rate would be.
 - Councilor Page stated it would be neutral. If we remove this amount from the general fund we would still have approx. \$21-22 million in the general fund. Still leaving plenty of wiggle room.
 - Councilor Manke stated that they are still working on our adjustment. Think it's a good idea; would have to abstain until we can review it further. We all want to do what we can to keep the BOE as whole as possible, all on same page.
 - Councilor Anest stated that we will be increasing the budget and we will have to fund that in the future.
 - Councilor Page stated he is not increasing anybody's budget, just responding to what the BOE needs.
 - Councilor Anest stated that the general fund will be \$1.7 million in the hole.
 - Councilor Page stated that the BOE has only had an average of 1.7% increase over the years. We are paying the piper now. Would like to more realistic budget.
 - Mayor DelBuono stated that as past practice we would exchange motions for consideration at least a certain amount of time prior to the meeting so caucuses can

meet, deliberate and talk about them. I haven't had time to digest these. Looking at number 2, it piles on more from the general fund in addition to number 1.

- Councilor Page asked not to discuss the content until a motion on number 1 is made.
- Mayor DelBuono stated she is not discussing the content, she's saying for me to make a decision on number one, that's a general fund appropriation and in my mind that's a large appropriation in addition to what is already recommended in our budget at \$2.9 million and there's another motion on the table asking for more. Those are things I would have to digest and discuss with my caucus and town staff in terms of what that would mean for future budgets. I agree, we don't want layoffs. This would now create a hole on our side, not getting monies from taxes or revenues, and the \$1.7 is a starting point, we have to fill that, so it adds on. This is a lot to process and consider. I will be abstaining from this. I've had a number of conversations with the superintendent and we are both looking at ways to get to a number that we are comfortable with. Cannot support this motion this evening.
- Councilor Nagel stated he concurs, he needs time to digest this. This has nothing to do with giving the monies to BOE to prevent layoffs, but we need to look at where the monies are coming from and what is going to happen in future years. How to do that without negatively affecting other things within in our budget. Nee time to fully digest and understand.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated that she to will have to abstain. We are still working on our ideas and when we do that it is a whole process. Would like to see us as a caucus and review these suggestions and how they are going to impact things overall. Glad that there is something written and this allows us to review and make better decisions.
- Mayor DelBuono stated that the last 5 years of the BOE budget there was a 3.4, 2.67, a zero (during COVID), and then a 2.46. The zero may skew that a bit.
- Acting Town Krupienski stated that you are getting at the minimum budget requirement. If you propose this, you would be required to start at that number the following year.
- Councilor Page stated that he is not looking to fund an amount higher than what is necessary to maintain our schools and prevent layoffs and staff.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Anest- abstain
Deputy Mayor Budrejko - abstain
Councilor Camillo - abstain
Councilor Donahue -abstain
Councilor Manke - abstain
Councilor Nagel - abstain
Councilor Page - yes
Councilor Radda - yes
Mayor DelBuono - abstain

- Motion failed - 7 abstentions; 2 yes - as indicated in the above roll call vote.
- Councilor Page moved to allocate \$4,000,000 of ARRA funds and \$1,300,000 from the general fund toward construction of a new pool at Mill Pond and splash pad at Churchill Park, allowing the Town of Newington to apply for matching state grants to complete the \$10,600,000 pool project.
 - Seconded by Councilor Radda.

- Councilor Manke stated just a point of order, during the budget process we can't allocate the \$4 million, it's not part of the budget. The council will need to vote on that separately.
- Ms. Murphy stated that Councilor Manke is correct. The money for ARPA is not part of the budget process and should be considered separately from this budget.
- Councilor Page asked when the \$4 million from the ARPA funds could be moved.
- Ms. Murphy stated they need to come before the council for allocation.
- Councilor Page amended his motion. Seconded by Councilor Radda
- Councilor Donahue stated that the Mill Pond Building committee is still discussing this but there has been no mention about a splash pad at Churchill. I will be abstaining from this motion.
- Councilor Radda asked who would have to bring the proposal for ARPA funds to the council.
- Councilor Donahue stated he believes that would be the building committee.
- Ms. Murphy stated she thinks it would be joint with the building committee and parks & rec.
- Councilor Page stated that two documents he reviewed was the engineering report specified a splash pad at Churchill and a larger pool at Mill Pond. This has been referenced in the past, not going to rush through, for some folks it's a complicated project. Now there are concerns about parking and that can be solved. Frustrated that that this has been talked about for decades and this is an opportunity.
- Councilor Manke stated we are here deliberating the \$1.3 million, not the location of the pool. That is taking \$1.3 million out of our general fund. I would oppose this suggestion.
- Mayor DelBuono stated that at the Mill Pond Pool committee last week a splash pad at Churchill was not mentioned. Leary about taking money from the general fund for a project we don't have any information on. In terms of parking, surprised to see parking was mentioned. Mr. DeMaio cited three locations near the town hall.
- Acting Town Manager Krupienski stated that he has not had a chance to review that yet.
- Mayor DelBuono stated she would not be in support of this or allocating \$4 million in ARPA funds.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Anest- abstain
 Deputy Mayor Budrejko - abstain
 Councilor Camillo - abstain
 Councilor Donahue -abstain
 Councilor Manke - abstain
 Councilor Nagel - abstain
 Councilor Page - yes
 Councilor Radda - yes
 Mayor DelBuono - abstain

- Motion failed - 7 abstentions; 2 yes - as indicated in the above roll call vote.
- Councilor Page moved to move \$80,000 of the \$160,000 allocated for the proposed assistant town manager position into the general fund to offset the balance needed for the proposed BOE budget in order to avert teacher/staff layoffs. We will have just completed the hiring process for the new Town Manager, and he/she, Town Council, Board of Ed and other town

departments will need time to review, assess, and engage before the new has to initiate another important and extensive search.

- Seconded by Councilor Radda.
- Mayor DelBuono stated she would like time to process this and talk with the consultants and find out what our timeline is. In my mind I envision the opportunity for the town manager to hire an assistant. Do agree that this motion has some merit.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated that this does have some merit. The new town manager will be under evaluation for a while. We just need to review during caucus.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Anest- abstain

Deputy Mayor Budrejko - abstain

Councilor Camillo - abstain

Councilor Donahue -abstain

Councilor Manke - abstain

Councilor Nagel - abstain

Councilor Page - yes

Councilor Radda - yes

Mayor DelBuono - abstain

- Motion failed - 7 abstentions; 2 yes - as indicated in the above roll call vote.

B. Annual Fair Housing Month Resolution

Motion by Deputy Mayor Budrejko

WHEREAS, All persons are afforded a right to full and equal housing opportunities in the neighborhood of their choice; and

WHEREAS, Federal fair housing laws require that all individuals, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, be given equal access to all housing-related opportunities, including rental and homeownership opportunities, and be allowed to make free choices regarding housing location; and

WHEREAS, Connecticut fair housing laws require that all individuals, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, age, lawful source of income, familial status, learning disability, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression be given equal access to all housing-related opportunities, including rental and home ownership opportunities, and be allowed to make free choices regarding housing location; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Newington is committed to upholding these laws and realizes that these laws must be supplemented by an Affirmative Statement publicly endorsing the right of all people to full and equal housing opportunities in the neighborhood of their choice;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and the Newington Town Council hereby endorses the Fair Housing Policy to ensure equal opportunity for all persons to rent, purchase and obtain financing for adequate housing of their choice on a non-discriminatory basis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Manager of the Town of Newington, or their designated representative, is responsible for responding to and assisting any person who alleges to be the victim of any illegal discriminatory housing practices in the Town of Newington and for advising such person of the right to file a complaint with the State of Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) or the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

(HUD) or to seek assistance from the CT Fair Housing Center, legal services, or other fair housing organizations to protect his or her right to equal housing opportunities.

Seconded by Councilor Radda. Motion passed 9-0.

C. FY 2024 State Historic Documents Grant Program Application

- Acting Town Manager Krupienski stated it will be nice to have all our books digitized and have them rebound. Have received over \$170,000 in grants from the state for this project. This will take care of the rest of volumes we have.

Motion by Councilor Radda

RESOLVED:

That James Krupienski, Acting Town Manager, or his successor/designee, is authorized to execute and deliver in the name of and on behalf of this municipality an application and contract acceptance with the Connecticut State Library for the Historic Documents Preservation Grant for Fiscal Year 2024.

Seconded by Councilor Nagel. Motion passed 9-0.

D. Town Manager Search Update

- Councilor Manke stated he was notified by the search company, and there have been a number of applications, sending out questionnaire and candidates to answer essay question. It's a process and the process is moving along. AT some point we are going to get applications and essays to read and then an interview process.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated that based on the communications from the consultants, there were 24 applicants, after some searching the consultant eliminated 3, and then one other applicant withdrew.
- Councilor Radda stated she was curious whether the consultant sifted through the applicants.
- Councilor Manke stated that they will do a more detailed background check as we get further in the process.

8. APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

A. Resignation – Central Connecticut Health District (CCHD)

Motion by Councilor Manke

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of Roy Zartarian, as a member of the Central Connecticut Health District (CCHD), in accordance with email correspondence dated March 31, 2023, and effective immediately.

Seconded by Councilor Nagel. Motion passed 9-0.

- Councilor Page extends his best to Roy and thank him for all he's done for our town. Unfortunate.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated she wanted to thank Roy for his contributions. CCHD was special to him, and he did a good job. We are all thinking of you and thanks for your efforts.
- Councilor Nagel stated he has known Roy personally and in his capacity in the town, he is a dedicated volunteer and human being who truly cares about this community and the health district and what it represents. Hope he takes care.

- Mayor DelBuono offered her thanks to Mayor Z. Takes his role in CCHD very seriously. He's given years to the town, and it is with sadness that we accept this resignation.
- Councilor Nagel stated that the door to the council chamber is open and every once in a while, Mayor Zartarian's photo come up.

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. Board of Education MOU Requests

a. Health Benefit Credit MOU

- Mayor DelBuono stated that there were two MOU's brought to us for consideration by the BOE in February and we wanted to be sure all of our information was correct. My understanding is that this money is available and is a surplus of \$156,577 and this could come over to the town and be reallocated to the Board's budget. This is new business and moved to the April 18th agenda prior to our budget amendments.
- Dr. Brummett stated that way it was portrayed is accurate. The money would simply go into next year's budget as an increase to the base.
- Councilor Manke asked where the credit balance came from.
- Dr. Brummett state each year there is health benefit credit calculated by Janet though an analysis of the money we've set aside for health benefits. Over the years you've seen over a million plus credits and that had a lot to do with COVID. We have a chance to use it or offset next years budget.
- Ms. Murphy stated that they did receive the credit and budgeted full amount and did not use the credit this year.
- Mr. Jachimowicz stated that somewhere around October 1 we get notification of the credit in the specific dollar amount. The typical protocol is in the succeeding months, either October or November, that will be used as an offset to that payment. It allows a surplus to sit in our benefits account equal to the amount of the credit.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated the money was credit last October. Isn't there an option to use it for next years...what are the option?
- Mr. Jachimowicz stated that is a decision made this time of year just before budget. So if there is a surplus calculation on the BOE side...
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated it's one fifty-six...
- Mr. Jachimowicz stated that is last year's number.
- Mayor DelBuono stated that this is not the estimated, this is already in there.
- Mr. Jachimowicz stated that when we got the March estimate, it was substantially higher than what it turned out to be. This year the estimate of that credit was \$150,700. Mr. Jachimowicz described how the credit is calculated. The numbers vary widely. The trend in the high deductible plans, more claims are paid in the second half of the year.
- Mayor DelBuono sated this make sense and will be moved to our next agenda.

b. Board of Education CIP Fund Surplus

- Dr, Brummett stated that this is new. We get reimbursed for any special education expenses attributed to our open choice students and we will bill them back at the fullest rate possible and our billable rates have come in quite strong, and we are anticipating, and that money does get credited to the CIP account per Charter. This year we are expecting approx. \$1.2 million in reimbursement for open choice monies for special ed and that actually has an impact on our operating budget because those are monies that

come out of our operating budget. We're proposing that \$400,000 of that money be credited back through an MOU, credited to the general fund for offsetting expenses.

- Mayor DelBuono stated that as typically we start with a \$2.5 million dollar expenditure out of the general fund and the amount of \$2.9 was because Janet assumed the MOU coming forward was going into the general fund to be expended towards the budget.
- Councilor Page asked how you got the \$400,000.
- Mayor DelBuono stated the cap on that account is \$1.2 million, so they are taking in an additional \$400,000 over that cap amount.
- Dr. Brummett stated that we thought it was a better use of the money to put it into the general fund for the operating budget.

B. BOE CIP Account Project Transfer Request-Undesignated Funds

- Mr. Jachimowicz stated that they are requesting \$345,000 in undesignated. Two major projects – pave north parking lot of Newington High School and repair athletic track at Newington High School (needs to get in pipeline). Don't have firm budget numbers as of yet. Hope to have these projects completed by the start of school in September.
- Mayor DelBuono asked if the track was one of the proposed changes to the budget.
- Mr. Jachimowicz stated it was discussed.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated it's great that the track is getting replaced. It's from the BOE CIP fund. Just discussing \$400,000 surplus. Wouldn't it make more sense to go back...know there's a cap. Your taking \$300,000 out and here is \$400,000.
- Mayor DelBuono stated that the \$300,000 is undesignated ready to be used.
- *A discussion was held regarding the funds.*
- Mr. Jachimowicz stated that payment is not received until early July. By putting them back into the operating budget is an appropriate request because it is coming out of the operating budget. There are restrictions of putting that money into CIP.
- Dr. Brummett stated that the \$400,000 is already accounted for in the budget.
- Mr. Jachimowicz stated that this request has required us to address important issues.
- Councilor Camillo stated that they need a new field. Wouldn't put a track around a field if you need a new one. You have \$1.2 million and that would cover the field and a track. You can go with synthetic turf like Clem Lemire. You have the money. It's an attraction for the school and the town. It's way overdue for Newington.
- Mr. Jachimowicz stated that the BOE CIP fund has been guided toward technology. Around \$750,000 is earmarked for that.
- Councilor Camillo asked if they could get reimbursement from the state for the new field. It's more than
- Mr. Jachimowicz stated that a lot of athletic driven expenditures are not reimbursable by the state program. I'd have to review that.
- Councilor Camillo stated that it's way overdue and you don't put a new track in before that. Let's start talking about that now. That's important and it's an attraction to get athletes from other towns.
- Dr. Brummett stated that to do a turf field at Clem Lemire would be at least \$2-3 million and a whole new track is probably \$1 million.
- Councilor Camillo stated that the problem with some of these contractors is they see board of ed and they put a number out and they take it.

- Mayor DelBuono stated that in terms of the BOE budget, we can recommend things, but it's ultimately their decision as to where the money is spent. These funds are available and I have no problem with this request.

10. **WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER**

- Acting Town Manager Krupienski stated that this Saturday the town hall will be offline to connect the solar panels to the building; Jamie Trevethan stated that the Senior Center received a \$50,000 grant for vaccination clinics.
- Councilor Page frustrated that the budget was not in Rare Reminder. Afraid people are not aware of what is going on with the budget. Also understand budget amount was incorrect.
- Acting Town Manager Krupienski stated the wrong budget was posted on the website. Regarding publication it was due to timing, the Courant you can advertise 6 of 7 days, the Rare Reminder advertises on Thursday, and you need information by Monday and we took action on Tuesday.
- Councilor Page stated we need to do a better job of communicating with the public. Why aren't we using the Twitter page.
- Acting Town Manager Krupienski stated that may be an option with the new website. Also, per Charter we are to use the website and newspaper.

11. **COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Councilor Nagel stated that CROG met on March 21. Moving offices to Church Street in Hartford. Towns can apply for safe streets grants in April. CROG stated they can help with federal grants in relation to that. Regional planning to help the region with affordable housing.
- Councilor Donahue stated we had a Mill Pond Bldg. Committee Meeting and have questions for the architect and Bill DeMaio. Hope to have another meeting before the end of April.

12. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - IN GENERAL (Via Zoom Application or Phone)
(3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT PER SPEAKER ON ITEMS IN GENERAL)**

- Amy Perotti, 175 Hillcrest Avenue stated she appreciated Councilor Page coming forward with budget suggestions, too bad they were not passed. For better transparency wish more members did so. Sounds like the majority party is working hard behind the scenes, more public, that way both parties can bounce ideas off each other and work more collaboratively. Feel like there is not a lot of public participation because we don't know what on the table and what the council is thinking and what to support. Not a lot of transparency with the whole process. With there was more public collaboration. Not a lot of options for public participation.
- Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive (*via Zoom*) stated that while listening to the discussion about Mill Pond pool, very disappointed after going through minutes; after 18 months nothing has been done. Councilor Page hasn't been on the council long, but this goes way back. You need to follow the money and the plan. The ball has been dropped. Watched Mill Pond Pool committee meeting and an hour into it realized was watching May 2021 meeting. Nothing much has changed since then. Something needs to be done. Sure other departments can use part of that \$4 million. The website is awful.

13. **REMARKS BY COUNCILORS**

- Councilor Page stated wishes everyone in town was as off as Rose Lyons. Need more residents and citizens to participate. In response to Councilor Manke about he one time payment, don't consider it one time fix, pool, libraries, etc. are a tremendous value to our

town. Money spent today will save us money down the road. This is a tremendous opportunity that we cannot miss.

- Councilor Manke stated to be clear I am in favor of pool. Not in favor of taking \$3 million out of the general fund to fund expenses this year; next year we will have to take more money to catch up. Can't keep taking \$3 million per year out of general fund. To Ms. Perotti's comments – if we didn't like Councilor Pages suggestions we would have voted no, we voted to abstain so they are still on the table, and we can still discuss them. I owe that to my colleagues. Your comment that we on this side, we are working hard, spent more time in this building than I care to admit. We are all trying to get to the same point. None of us take this lightly.
- Councilor Radda stated in response to what Ms. Perotti had to say. We presented some of our amendments to the budget tonight and know that you are working hard, is there any thought or ideas when those might be presented to us to review. I agree with Councilor Manke, we are all working towards the same goal and to be well informed is important. I also have a question regarding the funding from cannabis sales and when that will occur?
- Acting Town Manager Krupienski stated he's heard nothing specific, still waiting for the state to give us numbers to bill out. The Hartford Business Journal stated during first full months of January and February there was \$12.2 million in sales statewide, works out to be approx. \$30,000 coming to the town.
- Ms. Murphy stated that is the amount we came up with based on the total number of dispensaries and sales. Still waiting to hear back from the state.
- Councilor Radda stated that is earmarked for Human Services.
- Ms. Murphy stated that would be an adjustment to the general fund which would offset human services.
- Mayor DelBuono stated that she wanted to address some comments. Councilor Page mentioned funds coming from the state for the Mill Pond project. That has not been approved by the state and that is something our legislators brought forward and they would seek out for us. I did speak with Rep. Turco and he assured me if we are not able to get the project ready, he is willing to try and get the money for the next fiscal year so we won't miss out; the opportunity will be there for next year. Personally, I would like to make sure the plan is acceptable to all stake holders, and we have a solid plan.
- Acting Town Manager Krupienski stated that Rep. Turco suggested maybe smaller projects, looking for funds for the library. Still discussions going on.
- DelBuono was appreciative that he came to me with that information. In terms of sharing our changes, I was caught off guard tonight with the budget adjustments brought forward for consideration. Councilor Page and I had a discussion after the last meeting about when we could exchange ideas and I indicated that I will be out of town and our caucus will be meeting on the 16th or 17th to crunch numbers and then reach out to you with that information. There is intent and we already shared that. It concerns me that it's being represented that there was no discussion of such or intent to share. That intent still exists and we need to make sure it's ready for consideration. We've been spending a lot of time going to Ms. Murphy's office and the town manager to make sure the ideas we have, and quite frankly, there's been many years where we brought forward proposals and we got feedback from the town manager or Ms. Murphy and we were like, oops, that doesn't make sense. Trying to avoid those oops moments and are vetting everything. This budget just became ours at our last meeting, up until then it was the town managers proposed budget and we weren't able to make any changes until it became our budget.

We were still hearing the budgets. The timeline is crazy and crunched and that is the way it is set in the Charter. Thank you to Dr. Brummett who has been open to discussions and thought and ideas.

14. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. Newington Parks & Recreation – Beechwood Park Playground Grand Opening, April 15, 2023 – 12-2 p.m.
- B. Newington Parks & Recreation – Newington Goes Country, June 8, 2023
- C. Newington Parks & Recreation – Food Truck Friday, June 9, 2023
- D. Central Connecticut Health District Educational Seminar, Ticks & Tick-Borne Diseases of the Connecticut River Valley, April 27, 2023
- E. Councilor Manke – Friends of the Library book sale April 14, 15, 16 – Friday, Saturday and Sunday

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. CGS 1-200(6)(C) Security – John Wallace Middle School

Motion by Councilor Manke

RESOLVED,

That the Newington Town Council, in accordance with CGS §1-200(6)(C) hereby moves to go into Executive Session and invites the Town Council members, the Mayor, James Krupienski, Acting Town Manager, Dr. Maureen L. Brummett, Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Bruce Fletcher, Board Chairperson, Amy Perotti, Board Member, Lou Jachimowicz, Chief Finance & Operations Officer, Daniel Dias, John Wallace Middle School Principal and Michael Morgan, Director of Security & Residency, to discuss a security issue: John Wallace Middle School.

Seconded by Councilor Donahue. Motion passed 9-0.

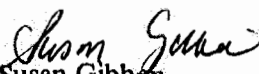
The council adjourned to executive session at 9:15 p.m.

The council resumed the regular meeting at 10:34 p.m.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilor Manke to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 p.m. Seconded by Councilor Camillo. Motion passed 9-0.

Respectfully submitted,


Susan Gibben
Council Clerk